

PHYSICAL THERAPY IN BINGE EATING DISORDER: STATE OF THE ART

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SPECIAL INTEREST REPORT

Purpose and relevance: Since a distorted body experience and a sedentary lifestyle are central in the course of binge eating disorder (BED), physical therapy might be an interesting add-on treatment. The purpose of this special interest report is to present a systematic review of randomised controlled trials (RCTs) evaluating physical therapy on binge eating and physical and mental health in BED patients.

Description and evaluation: EMBASE, PsycINFO, PubMed, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature, Physiotherapy Evidence Database and Cochrane Library were searched from their inception for relevant RCTs comparing physical therapy with a placebo condition, control intervention, or standard care.

Conclusions: Three RCTs involving 211 female community patients (age-range: 25-63years) met all selection criteria. Review data demonstrate that aerobic and yoga exercises reduce the number of binges and body mass index (BMI) of BED patients. Aerobic exercise also reduces depressive symptoms. Only combining cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) with aerobic exercise and not CBT alone reduces BMI. Combining aerobic exercise with CBT is more effective in reducing depressive symptoms than CBT alone.

Implications: The limited number of available studies and the heterogeneity of the interventions prevent us to make overall conclusions and highlight the need for further research before any clinical recommendations can be formulated.

Keywords: physical therapy, aerobic exercise, yoga, binge eating

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